

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) An address inquiry system for informing an inquirer of a new address of a changer based on an old address of the changer via an Internet, the old address having been changed to the new address, the system comprising:

a data base relationally storing at least the old address, the new address, and an address disclosing condition capable of setting a condition whereby the changer judges whether to give permission to disclose the new address such that the changer controls who has access to the new address;

a means for searching the new address corresponding to the old address and the address disclosing condition from the data base when the inquirer sends an inquiry including the old address;

a means for making the changer confirm whether the new address is disclosed when the address disclosing condition in searching includes the set condition;

a means for informing the inquirer of the new address via the system when the changer permits the disclosure of the new address; and

a means for refusing an inquiry from the inquirer via the system when the changer refuses to permit the disclosure of the new address,

wherein the data base includes a list of specific inquirers who are refused inquiries about the new address, [[and]]

wherein the means for refusing adds the inquirer to the list and informs the inquirer that the inquiry is refused when the changer refuses to permit the disclosure of the new address, and refuses a subsequent inquiry from the inquirer included in the list until the changer changes a refusal status for the inquirer, and

wherein, if the inquirer inquires of the new address twice and was refused, then future requests from the inquirers to the changer are not forwarded to the changer.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Original) The address inquiry system as set forth in claim 1,
wherein the data base relationally stores a plurality of old addresses and one new address.

4. (Original) The address inquiry system as set forth in claim 3,
wherein the address disclosing condition is allowed to be set on each of the plurality of old addresses in the data base.

5. (Previously Presented) The address inquiry system as set forth in claim 1,
wherein the old address and the new address each include at least one sort out of an electronic mail address, an IP address, a Uniform Resource Locator, a telephone number, an address, and a residence.

6. (Original) The address inquiry system as set forth in claim 5, further comprising:
a means for informing the inquirer of the new address of a predetermined sort according to the sort of the old address included in the inquiry sent from the inquirer.

7. (Original) The address inquiry system as set forth in claim 1,
wherein the inquiry sent from the inquirer includes a message text sent from the inquirer to the changer,

the system, further comprising:

a means for sending the message text to make the changer confirm whether the new address is disclosed according to the selection of the changer.

8. (Currently Amended) A system for making an inquiry about an address, comprising:

an address data base, in which a registrant registers his or her own address, relationally storing an address disclosing condition for an inquirer who wishes to know the address of the registrant such that the registrant controls who has access to his or her own address;

a disclosure judging means for judging whether to disclose the address to the inquirer based on the address disclosing condition when the inquirer makes an inquiry about the address of the registrant;

an address disclosing means for disclosing the address of the registrant to the inquirer via the system if the disclosure judging means judges that the address is disclosed, wherein the disclosing condition includes information about inquirers to whom the address is disclosed or not disclosed; and

an address disclosure refusing means for refusing to disclose the address of the registrant to the inquirer via the system if the disclosure judging means judges that the address is refused to be disclosed until the registrant changes a refusal status for the inquirer,

wherein the disclosure judging means includes a confirming means for making the registrant confirm whether the address is disclosed to the inquirer when the inquirer who inquires about the address is not registered in the inquirers in the disclosing condition,

wherein the confirming means informs the registrant of the attribute information about the inquirer at the time of confirmation, and includes a disclosing condition registering

means for receiving a confirmation result from the registrant and registering the inquirer in the disclosing condition as an inquirer to whom the address is disclosed or not disclosed,

wherein the address data base stores one, or two or more old addresses of the registrant, [[and]]

wherein the disclosure judging means receives the old address of the registrant in the inquiry about the address of the registrant from the inquirer and acquires the address disclosing condition of the registrant by searching the address data base with this old address, and

wherein, if the inquirer inquires of the new address twice and was refused, then future requests from the inquirers to the registrant are not forwarded to the registrant.

9. (Cancelled)

10. (Previously Presented) The system as set forth in claim 8,

wherein the address data base stores one, or two or more old addresses of the registrant, and

wherein the disclosure judging means receives the old address of the registrant in the inquiry about the address of the registrant from the inquirer and acquires the address disclosing condition of the registrant by searching the address data base with this old address.

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Previously Presented) The system as set forth in claim 8,

wherein the information about the inquirers to whom the address is disclosed or not disclosed includes information that the address is disclosed or not disclosed to all of the inquirers or only a part thereof.

13. (Cancelled)

14. (Previously Presented) The system as set forth in claim 8,
wherein the attribute information includes a profile of the inquirer.

15. (Previously Presented) The system as set forth in claim 8, further comprising:
an inquirer attribute information storing means for previously storing the attribute information about the inquirer; and

an inquirer attribute information registering means for accepting registration of the attribute information from the inquirer when the attribute information of the inquirer is not stored by the inquirer attribute information storing means.

16. (Previously Presented) The system as set forth in claim 8,
wherein the confirming means allows a part or all of a message to the registrant received from the inquirer to be sent to the registrant.

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Previously Presented) The system as set forth in claim 8,

wherein the disclosure judging means refuses to disclose the address to the inquirer when a response to a confirmation requested by the confirming means is not obtained from the registrant before a predetermined deadline.

19. (Original) The system as set forth in claim 8, further comprising:
a means for informing the registrant that the inquirer made the inquiry about the address.

20. (Original) The system as set forth in claim 8,
wherein the address is an electronic mail address.

21. (Original) The system as set forth in claim 8,
wherein the address is a home page address.

22. (Original) The system as set forth in claim 8,
wherein the address is a telephone number or an address/residence.

23. (Previously Presented) A computer software product for instructing a computer system to inquire of a system according to claim 8 for making an inquiry about an address, about an address, comprising:
a storage medium; and
an inquiry instructing means, stored in the storage medium and started based on the return of an electronic mail because its destination is unknown, for instructing the computer system to inquire of the system for making the inquiry about the address about an electronic mail address of an addressee of the electronic mail.

24. (Previously Presented) A computer software product for instructing a computer system to inquire of a system according to claim 8 for making an inquiry about an address, comprising:

a storage medium; and

an inquiry instructing means, stored in the storage medium and started based on the impossibility of display of a home page because its destination is unknown, for instructing the computer system to inquire of the system for making the inquiry, about the address about an address of the home page.

25. (Original) The computer software product as set forth in claim 24, further comprising:

a home page displaying means for instructing the computer system to display the home page concerned in the address based on the disclosure of the address by the system for inquiring about the address.

26. (Currently Amended) A method for inquiring about an address of a registrant with a system connecting to an Internet, comprising:

an inquiry receiving step of receiving an inquiry about the address of the registrant from an inquirer;

a registration judging step of judging whether the registrant is registered in an address data base;

a disclosure judging step of judging whether the address is disclosed to the inquirer based on a predetermined disclosing condition when the registrant is registered in the address data base;

an address disclosing step of disclosing the address of the registrant to the inquirer via the system if it is judged that the address is disclosed in the disclosure judging step such that the registrant controls who has access to the address of the registrant; and

and address disclosure refusing step of refusing to disclose the address of the registrant to the inquirer via the system if it is judged that the address is refused to be disclosed in the disclosure judging step until the registrant changes a refusal status for the inquirer,

wherein the disclosing condition includes information about inquirers to whom the address is disclosed or not disclosed,

wherein the disclosure judging step includes a confirming step of making the registrant confirm whether the address is disclosed to the inquirer when the inquirer who inquires about the address is not registered in the inquirers in the disclosing condition,

wherein the confirming step includes a reporting step or reporting attribute information about the inquirer to the registrant, and a disclosing condition registering step of receiving a confirmation result from the registrant and registering the inquirer in the disclosing condition as an inquirer to whom the address is disclosed or not disclosed, and

wherein it is judged whether the registrant is registered by searching the data base with an old address of the registrant in the registration judging step, and

wherein, if the inquirer inquires of the new address twice and was refused, then future requests from the inquirers to the registrant are not forwarded to the registrant.

27. (Cancelled)

28. (Previously Presented) The method as set forth in claim 26,

wherein the registration judging step includes a step of making the inquirer select a registrant whose address the inquirer inquires about when the old address of the registrant is registered for a plurality of registrants in the data base.

29.-30. (Cancelled)

31 (Previously Presented) The method as set forth in claim 26,
wherein the attribute information includes a profile of the inquirer.

32. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 26, further comprising:
an inquirer attribute information storing step of previously receiving and storing the attribute information about the inquirer.

33. (Previously Presented) The method as set forth in claim 26,
wherein a part or all of a message to the registrant received from the inquirer is allowed to be sent to the registrant in the confirming step.

34. (Cancelled)

35. (Previously Presented) The method as set forth in claim 26,
wherein the disclosure of the address to the inquirer is refused in the disclosure judging step when a response to a confirmation requested in the confirming step is not obtained from the registrant before a predetermined deadline.

36. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 26, further comprising:

a step of informing the registrant that the inquirer made the inquiry about the address.

37. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 26,
wherein the address is an electronic mail address.

38. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 26,
wherein the address is a home page address.

39. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 26,
wherein the address is a telephone number or an address/residence.

40. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 37, further comprising:
a step of making an inquiry about the address based on the return of an electronic mail
sent from the inquirer to the registrant because its destination is unknown.

41. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 38, further comprising:
a step of making an inquiry about the home page address of the registrant based on the
refusal of a request for the display of a home page transmitted from the inquirer to the
registrant because its destination is unknown.

42. (Previously Presented) The address inquiry system as set forth in claim 1,
wherein the attribute information about the inquirer includes identity information of the
inquirer.

43. (Previously Presented) The address inquiry system as set forth in claim 8, wherein the attribute information about the inquirer includes identity information of the inquirer.

44. (Previously Presented) The address inquiry system as set forth in claim 26, wherein the attribute information about the inquirer includes identity information of the inquirer.

45 (New): An address inquiry system for informing an inquirer of a new address of a changer based on an old address of the changer via an Internet, the old address having been changed to the new address, the system comprising:

a data base relationally storing at least the old address, the new address, and an address disclosing condition capable of setting a condition whereby the changer judges whether to give permission to disclose the new address such that the changer controls who has access to the new address;

a search device which searches the new address corresponding to the old address and the address disclosing condition from the data base when the inquirer sends an inquiry including the old address;

a change confirmation device which makes the changer confirm whether the new address is disclosed when the address disclosing condition in searching includes the set condition;

an informing device which informs the inquirer of the new address via the system when the changer permits the disclosure of the new address; and

a refusal device which refuses an inquiry from the inquirer via the system when the changer refuses to permit the disclosure of the new address,

wherein the data base includes a list of specific inquirers who are refused inquiries about the new address,

wherein the refusal device adds the inquirer to the list and informs the inquirer that the inquiry is refused when the changer refuses to permit the disclosure of the new address, and refuses a subsequent inquiry from the inquirer included in the list until the changer changes a refusal status for the inquirer, and

wherein, if the inquirer inquires of the new address twice and was refused, then future requests from the inquirers to the changer are not forwarded to the changer.